

For GOD, *or for* BAAL;
OR,
No Neutrality *in* Religion

A
S E R M O N

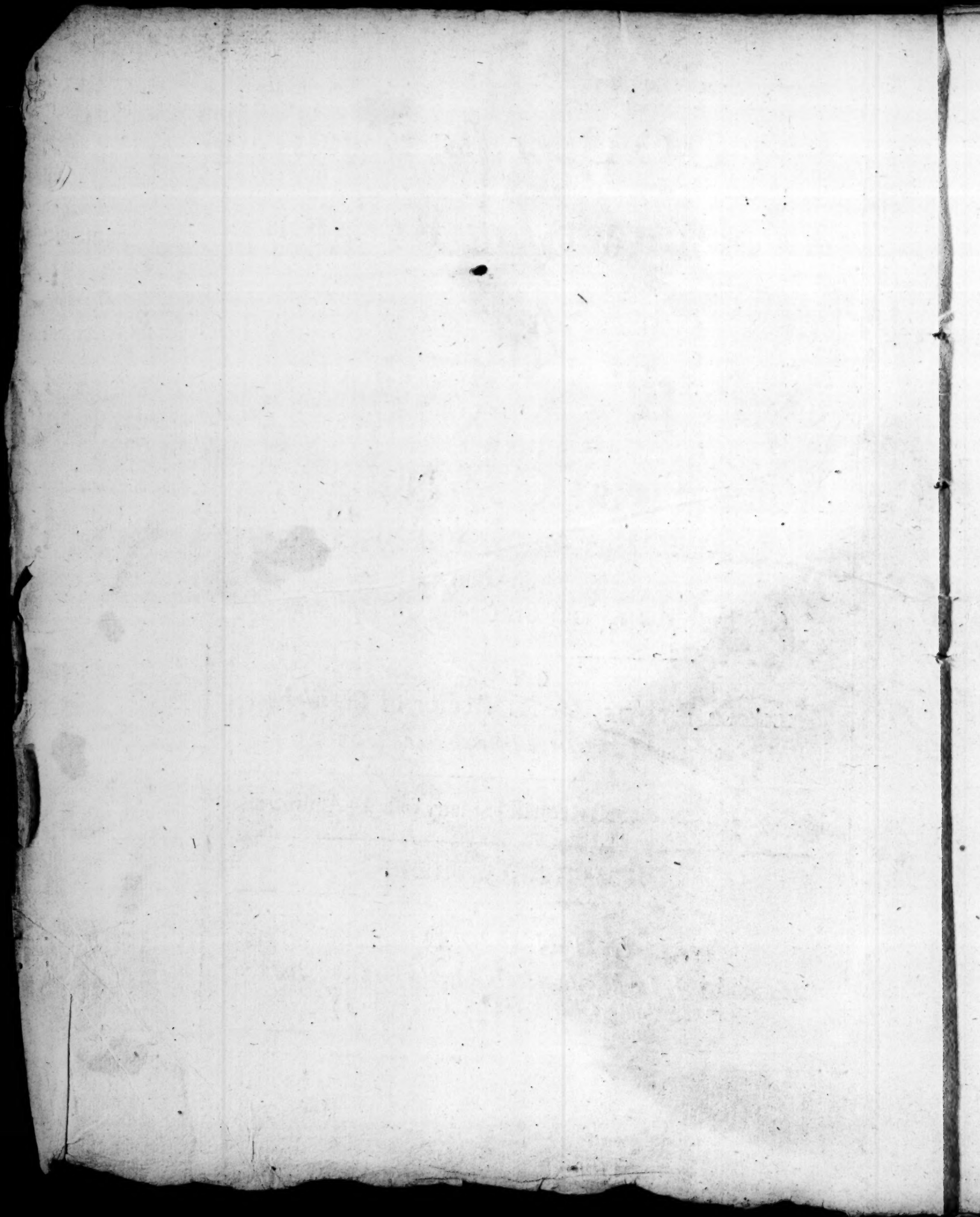
AGAINST
Occasional Communion,
PREACH'D on *Sunday, Octob. 4th* 1702.
In the Parish-Churches
Of *St. Alphage*, and *St. George Botolph-lane*.

BY
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Publisb'd at the earnest Request of many in both Auditories.

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L O N D O N,
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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
- AND
Right Reverend Father in GOD,
HENRY
LORD BISHOP of LONDON.

May it please Your LORDSHIP,

TO receive this Address with the Favour
you bear to all who cordially appear in
the Cause of GOD.

For, though the Number of Hearty Friends
who join'd (with those of the Cure committed to
me by Your Lordship) in calling for the season-
able Publication of this Discourse against Occa-
sional Communion, is by no means inconfi-
derable; Yet I cannot think my self secure but
under Your Lordship's Protection, from the far
greater Number of such, whose Odium I must
inevitably stir up, whilst I charitably endeavour
to reclaim them from a scandalous, however
pleasing Opinion, or profitable Practice.

The DEDICATION.

Nor can I doubt of Your Lordship's Countenance, when I am persuading Men to be steady, and act upon Principle, which Your Lordship has been all along teaching the World by a shining Example even in the gloomiest Times, to the visible Advantage at this day of God's Church Establish'd amongst us.

But whatever Consequences may otherwise attend me on this Account, I shall be well satisfied in my own Mind, If I may so strike the favourable Opportunity in this Attempt, as, by God's Blessing, to Strengthen any of those who stand for us, Help the wavering who would otherwise be against us, or raise up those that are fallen from us; and thereby approve my Fidelity to my Great Master, and Your Lordship, as is the bounden Duty, of,

My much Honoured, good Lord,

Your Lordship's

most Dutiful

Son and Servant,

PH. STUBS.

[I]

A

SERMON

AGAINST
Occasional Communion,

FROM
I KINGS xviii. 21.

*And Elijah came unto all the People, and said,
How long halt ye between two Opinions? if
the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal,
then follow Him. And the People answered
him not a word.*

THIS Speech of *Elijah* is a reproachful Ex-
postulation with the People of *Israel*, on a
scandalous Practice, too rife with them in
that Prophet's days, of *Trimming* between
two Religions, or *Halting between two Opinions*, as He
expresses it, between the Worship of the True God,
and the false.

"Which Metaphor of *Halting*, i. e. of inclining
"one's Body now one way, and now another (say
the *Assembly of Divines*, in their *Larger Annotations*
upon the Bible) may be applied two ways.

See their Notes
on the words,
*How long halt
ye?* Edit. 3d.
1657.

B

I. "To

1. " To the Body of the People, whereof some inclined their Hearts to JEHOVAH, and others to " *Baal*.

2. " To the same Persons, who in some things, at " some times, inclined to JEHOVAH ; in other " things, at other times, to *Baal*.

It is probable, that the latter is here especially intended, say they.

To lead you into a just Notion of which Case, and by consequence to make my Discourse against *Occasional Communion* (which I intend from the Text) the more intelligible, and more edifying ; Give me leave to state the Circumstances that People were under at that time, in this short following Account of them.

The People of *Israel*, *i. e.* the Twelve Tribes, had for a long train of Years, through various Dispensations of Mercies and Judgments, continued one People in Church and State under their several Forms of Government, Theocracy, Judges, and Kings, till the Beginning of *Rehoboam's* Reign.

At that Juncture, for the Provocations of *Solomon* His Father, who in his declining Years followed Strange Gods, by the Allurement of his Wives, the Kingdom was divided, by the Revolt of Ten Tribes under *Jeroboam*, which from that period, as the major-part of the whole, were called the Kingdom of *Israel* ; whilst the Two Loyal Tribes, *Benjamin* and *Judah*, who continued firm to the Old Establishment, were from the larger Tribe singly denominated the Kingdom of *Judah*.

Jeroboam being forward to Head this *Rebellion* in the *State*, and having managed it to His purpose, fearing lest He should not otherwise secure the Throne to Himself and his Posterity, by the Assistance

stance of the Evil One, He contrives a *Schism* in the Church ; He sets up two *Golden Calves* in the two most convenient Places for Worship in his Dominions, the one at *Dan*, the other at *Beth-el*, lest the People going up to sacrifice in the House of the Lord at Jerusalem, should turn again in their Hearts unto their Lord Rehoboam King of Judah, and should kill him, and go again to Rehoboam King of Judah, as is emphatically alledged in the History ; whilst he craftily insinuates to the deluded People, that he designed this Alteration in the Service of God for their Ease and Benefit only, as is plain also from the subsequent Account of Him, *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem*, saith He ; *Behold thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt*, as if he had really harangued them in the cajoling Address made for him by *Josephus* : “ I need not tell you, my Country-men, that “ God is every where, and not confined to any cer- “ tain Place ; but where-ever we are, He hears our “ Prayers, and accepts our Worship in one Place as “ well as another, and therefore I am not at all of “ opinion for your going up to Jerusalem at this time, “ to a People that hate you ; ’tis a long tedious Jour- “ ney, and all this only for the sake of Religion ; He “ that built that Temple was but a Man, as every one “ here is : and the *Golden Calves* that I have prepared “ for you, the one in *Bethel*, the other in *Dan*, are “ consecrated as well as that Temple, and brought so “ much the nearer to you, on purpose for the conve- “ nience of your Worship, where you may pay your “ Duty to God in such manner as best pleases Him : “ As for *Priests* and *Levites*, I shall make such provision “ for you, that ye shall have no want, either of the “ Tribe of *Levi*, or of the Race of *Aaron* : let him

1 Kings. 12.

—ver. 28,

29,

27.

Ἐδημηγόρησε
τέτρες ποιησά-
μεν ὁ τὸς λό-
γους, Ἄνδρες
ὁμοφύλοι, γινώ-
σκεῖν ὑμᾶς νο-
μίζω ὅτι, ὅτι
πᾶς τόπος ἔχει
τὸ θεόν.

Antiquit. Jud.
lib. 8. cap. 3.

“ that has a mind to enter into the *Sacerdotal*
 “ *Function*, initiate himself into the *Priesthood* by the
 “ Sacrifice of a *Calf* and a *Ram*, according to the
 “ Institution of *Aaron*, who was the first of that
 “ Order, and only so qualified.

Now this *Symbolical Representation* of the Worship of the God of *Israel*, instituted by *Jeroboam* and his Council, (for surely he designed no more by his *Calves*; not to introduce any New Gods, nor to conform thereby to the detested Rites of his Heathen Neighbours) had it not been attended with *Idolatrous* Consequences, was not only highly chargeable as a gross Innovation, for commanding in general a Novel Worship which God Almighty had all along forbidden, and forbidding the Exercise of that which he had alone commanded: But it seems to admit of heinous Aggravations in some of its principal Circumstances, such was,

1. His altering the *Visible Representation* of the Mystical *Symbols* used in God's Worship, and placing them at the greatest distance from each other, one of them at the one Extremity of his Countries *Northward*, the other almost at t'other in the *South*; whilst those appointed by God himself must be so close together, that the Wing of the one *Cherub* was to reach to the Wing of the other *Cherub*.
 2 Chron. 3. 11.

2. He was guilty as to the change of *Place*. God was pleased to ordain his Worship for the more solemn Honour of his Name, in that *Place which he had chosen* — 78. 68. for it on *Mount Sion which he loved*, even in *Jerusalem*, whither the Tribes were to go up at stated times, all the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of *Israel*: whilst *Jeroboam's* People must assemble separately in the City of *Dan*, or Mountain of *Beth-el*; neither of which
 Psa. 132. 13.
 — 122. 3, 4.

which could God, by any means, regard *as the Gates of* Pfal. 87. 2.
Sion, though they had equally gloried in being once
the Dwellings of Jacob.

3. He observed not the *Time* in some respect,
 keeping to the Day, but not the Month of the *Feast*
of Tabernacles particularly; God appointing it on the
 Fifteenth Day of the *Seventh* Month, as you read ex-
 pressly, *Levit. 33. 34.* which he nefariously transferr'd
 to the same Day of the *Eighth* Month, *even in the*
Month, saith God, *which he had devised of his own*
Heart, *1 King. 12. 33.* And,

Lastly, As to the *Ministers* of His Worship, he pro-
 voked God very highly, Who desiring to have them
 pick'd Men of the Tribe of *Levi*, Men on whom Lev. 21. 17, 21.
 should be found no manner of *Blemish*, Unexceptio-
 nable Persons in all respects, He rejects that Tribe, or
 rather, They rejecting his enormous Practices and
 Schismatical Proposals, *makes* to himself *Priests of the* 1 Kings 12. 31.
lowest of the People.

In all which Particulars *Jeroboam* appearing plainly,
 for Secular Ends, to set up Altar against Altar, a sort of
 odd new-fangled Conventicles, against the good Old
 Worship of *Israel* by Law Establish'd, how speciously
 soever He might pretend to close with it, and perhaps
 to refine upon it or reform it: He is, for this reason,
 “ (for seducing the Multitude into an Apostacy
 “ from the Laws of their God and their Country
 “ in Ecclesiastical Affairs) not only reprobated with 1 Kings 14. 10.
 his whole Race by God Almighty (who yet was — chap. 11, 12.
 pleased, at first, to make use of this very Man as an τὸν εἰπὼν ὁ
 Instrument to humble the Line of *David* for their ἡ πόλις καὶ λα-
 Backslidings) and became in consequence thereof “ the δν, &c. Ἀρχὴ
 “ Capital Cause and Author of all those Calamities κακῶν ἐγένετο
 “ that afterwards befell the *Hebrews*, as Foreign Wars, τὸ τῶ τοῖς Ε-
 “ Routs, βραίοις, &c.

“ Routs, Captivity, and the like, according to *Josephus's* excellent Remark upon the Passage afore-cited: But He is deliver'd down to Posterity, by Sacred Writers, as the most Infamous Ruler of God's People: One whose Sin was a Characteristick of all the bad Kings that came after Him, who are then only finish'd Implements of Iniquity when they *walk in the ways of Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

2 Chron. 11.

— ver. 13,

14,

16.

Having thus accounted, as was necessary for *Jeroboam's* Part in this Story, That he grossly deviated from the Publick Worship of the Most High God, and made all the Ten Tribes accessory to his Abominations, except *the Priests and the Levites that were in all Israel: who left their Suburbs, and their Possession, to come to Judah and Jerusalem, with such other good People, who setting their Hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem also with them to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their Fathers in the accustomed manner.* Be pleased to take notice in the Sequel hereof, That as the Gradation is easie from *Schism* or *Heresie*, to *Idolatry* or *Apostacy*, and that not only through the Divine Malediction, but a Natural Efficiency; *i. e.* as Men are very apt to fall from the false Worship of the true God into the profess'd Worship of a false God, or wholly degenerate to Atheism, no Worship of any God at all: So was it in this Instance;

The Revolting Tribes, after some struggle to the contrary in the former Years of the Reign of *Jeroboam*, having at length quietly acquiesced in their Separation from God's *Holy Place*, and thereby Spiritually divorced themselves from their Lord and Master; they became, in process of time, both
Ministers

Ministers and People, so alienated in their Affections from Him, notwithstanding their Zeal for Circumcision, Sacrifices, and other Mosaical Ordinances. That in *Ahab's* time, not more than Sixty Years from their first Disobedience, What through the Indigence of the *Clergy*, who being of the meanest of the People, were thrust into the *Priests Office*, as such who would make undue Compliances for a *piece of Silver*, or a *morsel of Bread*? What through the Covetousness of the *Laity*, who had Consciences large enough to swallow all such Riches or Honours as were the Rewards of a *Time-serving* Profession, they ran in almost all of them so uncontrollably into the Worship of *Baal*, that fashionable and lucrative Idolatry which *Jezebel* had prevail'd upon *Ahab* to countenance, that among Six or Seven Millions of People which that Kingdom may be supposed to have numbred a little before, there were but Seven Thousand left that had not bowed their Knees to *Baal*. 1 Kings 19.18.

In this sad posture of Affairs, when the whole Land almost was over-spread with a very abominable *Schism*, and cursed *Idolatry*, 'twas high time for God to visit this People; not that God had hitherto left them without Witness of his detesting their Dereliction of his *Sanctuary* for the *Golden Calves*, having sent to them *Iddo the Seer*, *Abijah the Prophet*; *Jehu the Son of Hanani*, in the Reigns of *Jeroboam* and *Baasha* particularly, with other excellent Men who laid themselves out wholly against the *Mischiefs* of that *Separation* begun under the impious *Son of Nebat*: But as He had before sent to them those His *Prophets*, *rising early, and sitting up late*, continually pressing them with quick Remonstrances, and denouncing sharp Judgments against that *Rebellious Separation*
of

of theirs which was as the *Sin of Witchcraft*, and that their *stubborn iniquity* which was as *Idolatry* in
 1 Sam. 15. 22. his sight who holds it better *to obey than sacrifice*, and
 — ver. 23. esteems more of *hearkning than the fat of Rams*: So
 now, when they had added *Hypocrisie*, and that the
 most bare-fac'd sort of it, to their former transgres-
 sions; When they could comply with any Religion,
 even the most decried *Idolatry*; When they would
 not stick at any *Terms of Communion* which would
 but keep them in their present Possessions, or make
 them still Greater (for 'tis plain, this was what they
 aim'd at by such a *Liberty of Conscience*.) 'Twas high
 time, I say, for the God of *Israel* to exert himself at
 such a Juncture, and curb, if possible, the head-strong
Scandal (the more dangerous, by how much the more
 prevailing on a *professing* People) lest that Defection
 of theirs which began in *Schism*, and continued on
 in *Idolatry*, should deplorably end at last (as is the
 natural Consequence of all such doubling Practices)
 in the finishing Stroke of *avowed Profaneness*, and de-
 clared *Atheism*.

To this end it was necessary an *extraordinary* Pro-
 phet should be raised up, I mean, a Person of more
 than common Courage and Conduct, who had a
 Spirit large enough to post-pone his private Interests,
 to that of the Cause of God, and dared forfeit the
 otherwise valuable Character of *Moderation*, rather
 than sit down tamely silent, as the *four hundred Pro-*
phets of the Groves did (such were the Successors of
 those who originally dissented from the National
 Communion) under so growing an Evil, as was the
 Self-contradicting, the Self-condemning Religion of
 those Times.

Elijah

Elijah therefore commission'd to this purpose, and so qualified as argued his *Mission* to be from God, neither to be terrified by Nick-names and Threatnings, nor byas'd by Promises and Preferments, (as becomes every Minister of the Most High) addresses himself in the most concerning manner to all the People, in the words of my Text,

How long halt ye between two Opinions ? or Thoughts ? For *Thoughts* cause *Opinions*, say the q. v.

Assemblies Annotations, which indeed is well answer'd by the Original *Hebrew*, the same word which is here and elsewhere express'd by *Cogitations*, or *Thoughts*, in the Translations, importing very sufficiently the Tendrels of a Vine, or two prominent Twigs of Trees that are opposite to each other : As who should say, by way of Metaphor, or proverbially, He that *halts* in his Mind (which is a Deformity there,

as well as in the Body) between two *Thoughts* which shall cause different *Opinions* in Religious Matters, much more between two *Opinions* that shall lead Men into contrary Practices (which was the Prophet's business to reprehend) Such a Man is like the yielding Boughs of any tender Tree, continually fluctuating and bending this way or that, as the Wind of *Interest* or *Power* shall incline him : He is like a silly little Bird that hops and chirps continually from one Branch to another, not chanting out his Notes, or fixing his Station upon either : And in consequence of these desultory, irresolute, unwarrantable Dealings in Divine Affairs ; " Such a Man (to use the apposite Similes of a known *Dissenter* who has enquired into the Occa-

Vox Hebraicè עִפְפָּוָה proprie significat ramos aut prominentias rerum sibi mutuo oppositas ; vel palmites qui fluctuant & vacillant Vento agitati.

Videtur esse Sermo proverbialis, Quamdiu transilietis inter duas prominentias ? i. e. extrema, seu duo extreme posita : vel Metaphora ab avium desultoria inconstancia.

Avicula saltant ex uno ramo in alterum quod sint leves : At in rebus seriis non ita ludendum est.

P. Mart. Malv. Munst. sup. loc.

Mr. D. F's En-
quiry into the
Occasional
Conformity of
Dissenters in
Cases of Prefer-
ment, with a
Preface to Mr.
How, p. 10, 11.

sional Communion practised by some of his Brethren of the Separation amongst us, on a Civil Account) " is like a Ship with her Sails haled some back, and some full ; Like a Work-man, that builds with one Hand, and pulls down with t'other ; Like a Fisher-man, who catches Fish with one Hand, and throws them into the Sea with the other ; Like every thing which signifies nothing : To say, a Man can be of two Religions (*saieth he*) is a Contradiction, unless there be two Gods to Worship, or he has two Souls to save : (*He goes on,*) Religion is the Sacred Profession of the Name of God ; *serving Him, believing in Him, expecting from Him* ; and like the God it refers to, 'tis in one and the same object, one and the same thing, indivisible and inseparable ; there is in it no Neuter Gender, no Ambiguous Article, GOD or Baal ; *Medium's* are impossible.

From the whole of the Criticism, with what is gone before by way of Explication at large ; Be pleased to have your Eye upon these following Observables.

1. That the People to whom the Prophet *Elijah* makes his Application, had lapsed into a most enormous and unaccountable Sin, in professing highly for the Service of God, (the *God* that could equally carry them through all Difficulties, as at length inexpressibly reward all those who diligently obeyed Him,) and at the same time, for fear or for favour, for fear of *Jezabel's* Power, or through an o'er-fond Affection to the dazzling Satisfaction of Life, which they could not enjoy in an envied measure without the favour of *Ahab*, They closed in with his Idol, how opposite soever the Worship of that which *is nothing* in it self might be to the Worship of the Most High God, who
was

was *All in All*. From which prevaricating Practice a Handle might well be taken, as no doubt there was by the irreligious Standers by, to surmise that the pretended Belief of the God of *Israel* was a Politick Invention only, When they could so collude with Him, and serve Him by *Halves*, who were always call'd upon by his expresse Command, and their Law-giver *Moses*, to serve Him *with all their Heart*, See Deut. 6. 5. *with all their Soul, and with all their Might*: Such as — 10. 12. compared with those who waited for their *Haltings*, could not but St. Mat. 22. 37. St. Mark 12. 30. St. Luke 10. 27. be persuaded from such palpable Menage of theirs, (how mightily soever they loved to distinguish themselves from the rest of the World, by a Creed of their own at some times, and at other seasons gloss over the most irreconcilable Devotions by a peculiar Sophistry,) but that they themselves secretly believed the God of *Israel*, to be no other than such a God as *Baal*, or those of the Countries round them, Who had *Eyes, but saw not; Ears, but heard not*: Such an one, Psal. 115. 5. 6. as gave himself wholly up to his Diversions, either *pursuing or taking Journeys*, and little regarded what 1 Kings 18. 26. was doing below; or a *Drowsie Deity* at least, who listd not to rouse himself, and vindicate his blasted Honour on the Heads of such impious Wretches, who when charged with the Guilt of the most culpable *Temporizing*, were so altogether confounded, as to have *nothing* to say for themselves in their own Defence; For, *the People answer'd Him (Elijah, who reprimanded them) not a word*, as the Text expressly tells us.

2dly. You'll do well to take notice, That the People here reprimanded, were the People of *Israel*, *i. e.* The Ten Tribes who had not only revolted from the State-Government of their Ancestors under *Jeroboam*,

but made a Separation likewise at the same time from the Ecclesiastical Polity unalterably adhered to by all their Fore-fathers, now in possession of the Tribes of *Benjamin* and *Judah* only, who mainly profess'd to Worship their God according to his own Prescription: If this had not been so, the Prophet should have expostulated rather, *How long, or Why halt ye between three Opinions?* meaning, The true Worship of the True God, which Orthodox *Benjamin* and *Judah* followed; The false Worship of the True God, which was the way of some of the *Separatists*; And the downright Worship of the false God, which the *Time-Servers* I am speaking of complied with for their Interest, at the same time that they acknowledged the Lord *Jehovah* to be the true God who brought them out of the Land of Egypt: But when he calls upon them only to declare for GOD, or for *Baal*, which would put an end to the Controversie with them for their grievous defying *Occasional Conformity* at that time; 'tis plain, he strikes at them only, and had nothing to do with the two Tribes at present to whom he was not sent.

² Chron. 7.
ver. 12, 16.

Nor can any Argument be drawn hence, as some may insinuate, from the Prophet's *Disjunction* in favour of such of the Separation who had not thus bow'd their knees to *Baal*, as if their Schismatical Worship were in these Circumstances at least approved by God Himself. For allowing the worst, say they, That God had been angry for sixty years and upwards with their neglecting or despising his *Holy Place*, which He had chose to put his Name in, whilst they chose rather to Worship Him after their own Devices in *Dan* and *Bethel*, in *Mountains* and in *Groves*; Granting that God had taken measures accordingly, in stirring up
Iddo,

*Iddo, Abijah, Jehu the Son of Hanani, and other able Prophets, to bear their Testimony hitherto incessantly against their separate Meetings for his Religious Worship: yet, you see, when once things grow worser still; when an Amphibious sort of Worship became the prevailing Corruption; when too many amongst them who valued themselves in being Professors of his Religion, could yet scandalously carry two Faces in such a manner that a meer Non-Entity of a Deity pretended at length, by their means, to dispute Precedence, and vie Numbers, with the Creatour of its very Being, even the Most High God Blessed for evermore: When Matters came to this Crisis, in short, That too many amongst them were either Neuters in the Worship of Israel, or Deserters to Baal, and 'twas the Prophet's business to reduce them to Order, The Word was plainly, For GOD, or for Baal; No Notice, you see, was taken of their fighting out of their Ranks, or in independent Companies, so they continued but to Muster under the Banners of the Lord J E H O V A H: *Elijah* dealing in the Case of sinking Religion, as Men in a Shipwrack do, If all can't be saved in the body of the Ship, they let none of the Crew perish, who can any ways be got to Shore, though they may be (under God) beholden for their Lives (as those in the Acts were) to the weakest boards, or most broken pieces Acts 27. 44. in the Ship: In both which Instances, taken from the Art Military and Navigation, to which Religion is very properly compared, though their Worship be not allow'd preferable to that of the Publick, 'tis tolerable, and Salvation may be had in it, since there's no other Worship mention'd in the Prophet's Disjunction, but that and Baal's, They were to Declare for GOD, or for Baal.*

No,

See his Notes
on the place.

No, Should this sort of Arguing be allowed, we should run against the whole current of Interpreters with Mr. Pool himself, who in his *English Annotations* on the words, *If the Lord be God, follow Him*, makes the Prophet speak as express to our purpose as we could possibly desire, *i. e. Worship Him, and Him only, and that in such places and manner as he hath commanded you*, and not by the *Calves*; which without more to do, effectually overthrows the favourable Hypothesis mentioned. And indeed, could we suppose *Elijah's* Commission to be Extraordinary, with respect to the *Subjects* of Worship rather than the *Objects*, and his burthen for a while more against *their Halting* between two false ways, than their deviating from the true, we cannot but believe that upon the execution of his Commission therein, He should fall in at length with the full Cry of all his Brethren both before and after *Ahab's* time, against the form'd Separation, so odious to God Almighty, and so destructive to the temporal as well as spiritual Welfare of His People, which *Amos* (to mention one instead of many, *Iddo, Abijah, Jehu* before *Elijah*, *Hosea, Micah* and others after him) urg'd to them with very great application in that remarkable place of his *Prophecy*, chap. 5. ver. 4, 5, 6. Beseeching them in God's Name to renounce that unwarrantable Way of serving God, so opposite to the Establish'd Worship: *For thus saith the Lord unto the House of Israel, Seek ye Me, and ye shall live: But seek not Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba; i. e. as the Assembly and Mr. Pool together interpret, Seek not by-ways in coming to God,*
 " Seek not God at *Beth-el*, but at *Jerusalem*, where
 " He will be found; not at *Beersheba*, though *Abraham* dwelt there, God appear'd there to *Isaac*, and
 " *Jacob*

“ *Jacob* sacrificed there with acceptance : For now
 “ God appointeth *Jerusalem*, and the Temple, the only
 “ Places of his Worship, and of your seeking Him, &c.
 Therefore it follows, *Gilgal shall surely go into cap-*
tivity, and Beth-el shall come to nought. Seek the Lord,
and ye shall Live ; “ Return to the True God, and to
 “ his instituted Worship, so shall ye Live : If ye
 “ want his Blessing, it is through your want of seek-
 “ ing Him truly ; which thing you can never do, till
 “ you abandon your false Worship, and be regulated
 “ by his Word and Law only : Such mixtures [as
 “ have prevail’d] marr Religion, and God’s pure
 “ Worship, insomuch that ye may justly fear, *lest He*
break out like fire in the House of Joseph and devour it,
and there be none to quench it in Beth-el, ver. 5, 6.
 So zealous was God for *Uniformity* in His Worship,
 and so jealous of those who would *Divide* it, by setting
 up separate Assemblies. But to return,

3^{dly}. Affairs being in this desperate posture, ye’ll
 readily observe in the last place, How necessary the *Pro-*
phet’s Mission and Expostulation was at such a time, to
 call them off from their sinful and scandalous commu-
 nicating with GOD and *Baal* too ; To oblige them to
 determine for one side or t’other, and not always *Halt*
between these two Opinions : For that they did so, with-
 out dispute, I shall offer the unquestionable Evidence
 of the *Assembly of Divines* on the place, whose Judg-
 ment in this Case, with that of Mr. *Pool’s*, I have chose
 before any other Commentatours, all along, that I may
 argue without Exception : Now their thoughts you’ll
 best have from their own words, as they lie before
 you in the *Annotations*. *If the Lord be God,*] say they, 3^d. Edit. 1647.
 upon this part of my Text, “ Most of the People
 “ of *Israel* being circumcised, acknowledg’d that God
 “ which

“ which brought them out of *Egypt*, to wit, *Jehovah*,
 “ to be the True God; only they worshipped Him un-
 “ der the *Calves*, c. 12. v. 28. These also worshipped
 “ *Baal*. To these, saith *Elijah*, *If the Lord be God, fol-*
 “ *low Him*. “ He here adviseth them to deal with God,
 “ as a faithful Servant doth with his Master; He
 “ follows him whithersoever he goeth; He is ready to
 “ do whatsoever he requireth; He leans to Him, and
 “ will not follow another: *But if Baal,*] that Idol
 “ which they then worshipped, *Then follow Him.*] He
 “ granteth they had done well in following *Baal*, and
 “ that they might continue so to do, if they could
 “ prove that *Baal* were indeed God. This he grants
 “ the rather to move them to bring the Case to a
 “ Tryal, but not to give them Liberty to be of what
 “ Religion they pleased.

The grand Point thus uncontrollably cleared, *viz.*
 That the People of the Separation were they who
Halted in Israel between two Opinions, and chid for that
 Iniquity by the Prophet.

Calamy's A-
bridgment of
Mr. Baxter's
Life, ch. 10.
p. 558, &c.

Taylor against
Dean Sherlock,
of Church-
Communion,
ch. 6, 7.

How's Confi-
derations on a
Preface to an
Enquiry con-
cerning the
Occasional Con-
formity of Dis-
senters, &c.

Before I enquire into the like Practice avowed by
 some of our *Dissenters* at home, it may not be amiss,
 to look a little more narrowly into the nature of *Halt-*
ing between two Opinions in general, and see what Repu-
 tation it has obtain'd in the World, whether a Man of
 that Temper is not generally avoided as one either de-
 ficient in his Intellectuals, or perversely self-will'd: If
 so, If the Man who *Halts between two Opinions* in tem-
 poral concerns only, incurs the imputation of *Folly*,
 the next Advance we make, is, That He who doth so
 in matters of greater moment, where Eternal Misery
 may be the Consequence of his irresolute Principles,
 justly intitles Himself to *Bedlam*: For if such a Man's
 Principles press him to disagreeable, contrary Pra-
 ctices,

ctices, as they seldom fail to do it, and he goes sometimes against His Belief and Persuasion, He not only over-acts the Brute who recedes not from the Directions of Instinct and Sense: But in professing for God, and following Mammon, He stands wofully prejudg'd at the Great Tribunal, unless the Merciful and Gracious God shall of his alone Mercy be pleased before-hand to lead Him to Repentance; inasmuch as *He who knows his Lord's Will*, and doth the contrary, *ought to be beaten with most Stripes.* St Luke 12. ver. 47, 48.

'Tis certainly therefore the part of a Wise and a good Man, in Spiritual Affairs, to act steadily, and upon Principles: To satisfy himself fully of God's Will as to the Point in hand, and pursue such measures as are agreeable to it, according to the last Dictates of his best-inform'd Judgment: If He be persuaded in his own Mind, for instance in the Case before us, That He ought to follow GOD, Let such a Man's Integrity appear in publick, as well as be exercised in private: Let it triumph in Prosperous Days, as well as in Times more difficult: Let him courageously take up the Cross rather, even when Riches and Honours shall be the rewards of falling down and worshipping any other God, or complying with any sort of Worship more opposite to the Sacred Will of his God, than that to which he has hitherto join'd Himself: Whoever acts otherwise in an Affair of this Nature, is in danger of having a baser Ingredient yet thrown into the Complication of his Character: Whoso shall be found upon any such Juncture, to act with greater Partiality than heretofore, to Quench those Motions of the Spirit which have all along remonstrated against such Proceedings: In one word, To shut his Eyes in such a Tryal, where He who would be counted sincere, and by

consequence invite his God to intrust him with larger proportions of Grace here, and to glorifie Him hereafter, must act according to that Knowledge he has, be it never so little ; Such a Man, I say, will be look'd upon as one, who acts against the Light that God has given him, and prostitutes his Conscience, in letting his *Heart condemn him in that thing which he alloweth.*

Rom: 14. 22.

Now, who they are of our *own Communion*, or amongst the *Dissenters* that fall under this Black Imputation, by going sometimes to one sort of Worship, at other times to another sort, I am not, I hope, expected to be so uncharitable as to determine in Particular :

Nor would I be thought, from what hath been at large discoursed on the *Occasional Communion* of the revolted Ten Tribes in *Israel*, to brand those of the Separation in *England* with the Worship of *Baal* ; when from the whole Tenour of this Discourse, if any Will make me to have laid a Parallel, I have allow'd them to Worship God, tho' after an unwarrantable manner.

Much less can I be supposed now to have been yoking *Christ* with *Belial*, to have been joining our Holy Mother the Church to a Heathen God, how freely soever some Preachers and Writers of the more moderate Persuasions have been pleased, in their warmer Publications, to deal about those Hard Names of *Idol Shepherds*, *Prophane Sons* of *Belial*, *Priests* of *Baal*, *Bacchus*, and what not ? fixing them upon the most Orthodox, and most pious of her Children.

Cafe's Sermon at Milk-street, 30. Sept. 1643. p. 45, &c.

Love, 30. Jan. 1644. p. 18.

White's Epistle to his First Century.

Vicar's Jehovah Jireh, p. 88.

Strickland, 3. Nov. 1644. p. 32.

No, what I have chiefly aim'd at in so full an Explication of the Prophet *Elijah's* Message from the History of his Time, has been to apprize you in the clearest manner of God's anger against *doubting* and *tricking*

tricking in his Service, Whether the Comparifon between the *Separatifts* of our days may be fupposed to run upon all four, with the *Schifmaticks* in *Jeroboam's*, or not ; Or what diftance foever there is between the *National Worfhip* and that of *Baal*, as there cannot be greater than between the *Temple of G O D* and that of an *Idol*.

If the Men of our *Englifh Separation* at this day, either Preachers or People, do affent in Practice upon fome Occafions, from what they difsent with warmth in Opinion upon other Occafions ; Then it is plain, That they *Halt between two Opinions*, or between Opinion and Practice in Divine Worfhip, and thereby tread in the Steps of their Predeceffors in *Jeroboam's* days, the Malignity of whose Iniquity confifted partly in *Halting* thus, (as I have proved above from the *Assembly of Divines* own *Annotations* on the place) between the Worfhip of the Lord J E H O V A H, whom they facrificed to out of *Confcience*, and the Worfhip of *Baal*, which they complied with at the fame time out of *Interelt*.

So that, without making the *Con-formifts* and the *Difsenters* Worfhip two Gods ; without fupposing the Worfhip of the True God to be that of the *Church of England*, and that of the *Difsenters* to be the Worfhip of *Baal*, (as fome would have us thought to represent the Cafe, when we make ufe of this Text ;) Much more, without fupposing the *Difsenters* Worfhip to be that of the True God, whilst the *Church of England's* must be the Worfhip of *Baal*, (as the furious Bigots amongst them have fometimes represented the Cafe to be actually ;) upon the Grounds mention'd, I am fure the Application of thefe words to the Matter before us, is neither *uncharitable*, nor *prophane and moft impious Wit*,

Mr. How above (as one of the most Eminent *Tolerated Ministers* has cited, p. 27. been pleased lately *occasionally* to style it.)

For to be plain and short, Let the Guilty purge themselves; The whole Hinge of this Controverſie turns on this Point.

Either the Way of the *Church of England* Worship, and that of the *Dissenters*, are the ſame Way of Worſhip, or they are not.

Διὰ τὸ το λέγω
καὶ διαμαρτυ-
ροῦμαι ὅτι τὰ εἰς
αἵρεσιν ἐμπε-
σεῖν, τὸ ἔκ-
κλησίαν χῆσαι
ἐκ ἐλαττοῦ
ἐστὶ κακόν.

St. Chryſoſt. in
Ep. ad Ephes.
cap. 4.

Hom. xi.

Ignat. Cyp.

Aug. Optat.

Patres alij pas-
ſim.

1. If they are the ſame Way of Worſhip, Let thoſe clear themſelves, if they can, from the Charge of *Schiſm*, who uphold a *Sacrilegious Separation* at this day from the Church, which the beſt Chriſtians in the *Primitive Times* accounted as bad as *Hereſie*; Or indeed any Crime whatſoever, not excepting *Idolatry* it ſelf; and of all things to be avoided, in the firſt place, as the *Original of Evils*.

If that of the *Dissenters* be not the ſame Way of Worſhip, with Ours of the *Church of England*; Then we differ either in *Circumſtantials*, or in *Fundamentals*.

2. If we differ in *Circumſtantials* only, The Charge of *Schiſm* lies as cloſe to the *Dissenters* as before, as may be gather'd from the Conceſſions of the Parties themſelves, who, ſome of them, have long ſince given up the *Cauſe of Ceremonies*, and other leſſer Controverſies, as not to be ſupported without apparent hazard to the Souls of their Adherents.

“ Thoſe Modes or Circumſtances of Worſhip (ſaith Mr. Baxter, in his *Five Diſputations of Church-Government and Worſhip*) “ which are neceſſary in *Genere*, “ but left undetermin’d by God in *Specie*, are left by “ God to Humane Prudential Determination (eſſe an “ Impoſſibility ſhould be neceſſary :) But many ſuch “ there are that are neceſſary in *Genere*, but left un- “ determined of God in *Specie*; therefore many ſuch “ are

Diſp. 4 pag.
361, 362.
Printed, 1659.

“ are left to Humane Prudential Determination, and
 “ in such Cases lawful Governors may bind us by
 “ their Commands, on no less penalty, as he Himself *Disp. 5. p. 400.*
 explains our Obligations to Magistrates in his *Holy*
Commonwealth, than that of *Eternal Damnation*. And *Chap. 12.*
 another of their Advocates a little after acquaints us *Pag. 352.*
 in plainer *Terms*, “ It is not the Dignity of the Bi-
 “ ops, their Lordships and Revenues; It is not their
 “ Cathedrals, Organs, and their Divine Service in
 “ what State and Magnificence they please; It is not
 “ Common Prayer, no nor any Ceremony of the
 “ Church whatsoever for all its significancy, if it be
 “ but a Circumstance of Worship, and no more, that
 “ could hinder most of the sober *Nonconformists* to
 come over to you: What is it then that keeps us asun-
 der? Can any thing do it but *Fundamentals*? “ It is
 “ the Declarations, Subscriptions, and Oaths which
 “ you impose on them in your Acts, saith my Au-
 “ thor; Well then

A Proposition
 for the Safety
 and Happiness
 of the King
 and Kingdom,
 p. 18, 19.
 Printed, 1667.

If we differ in *Fundamentals*, These *Fundamentals*
 either respect the Conformity of our *Dissenting Mini-*
sters, or the *People* who follow them.

3. If they respect the Ministerial Conformity only,
 as the *Declarations*, *Subscriptions*, and *Oaths* menti-
 oned, hardly reach'd any else heretofore, Such were
 primarily, those in which the *Covenant* was renoun-
 ced, and the Abjuration of Rebellion made: Which
 Abrenunciations were as necessary to the Government
 then in Being, as the *Covenant* it self the Engage-
 ment, or other Bonds of that Nature could be of
 stead to former Politics (as proper Tests to distin-
 guish the *Ephraimites* from the *Gileadites* according
 to the Cant of those days,) So now, being become
 obsolete, or laid aside, as the *Abjuration* of the Cove-

nant

Provided al-
ways that af-
ter the 25th of
March 1682.
shall be omit-
ted the said
Declaration a-
bout the Cove-
nant; Act of U-
niformity, 14^o
Car. II.

nant was made to expire in 1682 by the *Act of Uni-*
formity it self, and the *Abjuration of Rebellion* at the
late Revolution. Those *Declarations*, or Acknowledg-
ments and *Subscriptions* are no longer a Bar to those
few surviving ejected Ministers who at first refused
them; much less do they keep out any of their De-
scendants, unless they'll make their Oaths binding *ex*
traduce, or *Hereditary Oaths*.

So much of
the Declara-
tion prescri-
bed in the Act
of Uniformity
as is expressed
in these words,
I A. B. declare
that it is not
lawful upon any
pretence what-
soever to take
up Arms, &c.
Shall not from
henceforth be
required or
enjoyed.
Stat. 1. W. and
M. Sess. 1. Cap.
8.
Shower's Fune-
ral Sermon on
Mr. Taylor,
Marginal Note
p. 35.

The Mention of which *Inunendo*, I could wish did
not leave an indelible Blot that will ever stick on the
Reputations of many of the Guides of that Party: For,
Had those Nonconforming Fathers who could not
comply with the *Bartholomew Act* for meer Conscience
of the Oaths, conscientiously enjoined their Sons to
close with the Communion of the Church, which they
themselves had otherwise come into, We should have
seen at this day no *Dissenting Academies* set up in op-
position to the two famous *Universities* of the Land;
We should not have heard any Recommendations of
Mr. Baxter's Life abridg'd as one of the best Vindica-
tions of *Non-Conformity*; Nor seen, nor heard, of a
Novel Generation transcribing and publishing the ener-
vated Defences of their Separation with *more Obstinacy*
and *less Reason* than their Fore-fathers: But to let that
pass, and bring the Matter to the last Resolution,
which is as follows, *viz.*

That if the Difference between the *Church* of Eng-
land Worship, and that of the *Dissenters* lies in *Fun-*
damentals which obstruct the Conformity of their
People, or forbid Lay-Communion with us: Then
those People of their Congregations who *occasionally*
Communicate with us, *Do think* that the Terms of
Communion requir'd by us, *do forbid* them to Com-
municate with us, or they *do not* think so.

4. If any of the Dissenting Hearers, *do think* that the Terms of Communion required by the Church of *England* are such as *do not forbid* them to Communicate with us; So long as they frequent other Congregations for Religious Worship than ours, I am to remind them still of *Schismatical* Separation.

If they *do think* that they *do forbid* them: If the Difference between us *forbids* the People's Communicating with us *constantly*, I shall be glad to know how a Place of Honour, Trust, or Profit, a little better Trade, a greater Fortune with a Wife, or other such like Arguments; nay, How a pretence of Peace it self can make *Occasional* Communion *lawful*: How private Interests can, or even a presumed Publick Good make that *lawful* which Conscience pronounces *unlawful*?

Calamy's Abridgment of Mr. Baxter's History of his Life and Times C. 10. p. 562.

Now that neither Communion with the Church of *England* in general, nor that Communion particularly here discountred of is reconcileable to the Conscience of a Religious Dissenter of the moderate Persuasions; (for such I must be supposed to have been dealing with all this while, not the wilder Enthusiastick Sectaries with whom we must argue upon another foot.) Be pleased to consider well a notable Passage to this purpose which I find in a *Letter from some Aged Non conforming Ministers to their Christian Friends touching the Reasons of their Practice*, and of their Congregations, in standing out against us, Printed this very Year, and therefore very remarkable, in that it doth our work of confuting our Adversaries on this Head from their own most *deliberate* Writings, at such a Crisis, when the Infection is spreading to the secret Triumph of the Men of *No Church*, to the detriment of the *True Church of Christ* Established in these Kingdoms; (and as one of their Party observes) to the great Scandal of the *Dissenting Churches*

London, Printed for J. Lawrence at the Angel in the Poultry.

Mr. D. F.—s
Preface to Mr.
How.

Churches, whose *Purity* and *Sincerity* is much questioned and undermined by such Heterogeneous Courses.

The Passage you find in the 7th and 8th Pages of the Book quoted, where stating the Reasons against *Conformity* in general, with the *Common-Prayer-Book* in particular, and the Use thereof in all its Parts and Orders, as the Law directs, the Authors thereof give their Sentiments in the following Words very fully to our purpose: “It is what we do not approve, so as ordinarily to Worship God thereby: and while this is our Judgment and Conscience, we dare not practise what we disallow. Indeed every Person is not required (as Ministers are) to manifest his approving this way of Worship by vocal Assent, Consent and Subscription thereto; but Practice is the same in Effect, in other Cases: and why not in this? We must speak, and do the *Truth in our Heart*, Plal. 15. 2. unless we are fallen from the *simplicity that is in Christ*; and sure Protestants will not deny, that every Christian ought to have a *Judgment of Discretion*, concerning his own Practice. To Practise Conformity and not approve it (at least as tolerable) is double Dealing.

“And hereby the Law avowedly designs *Uniformity in Religion*, i. e. That every Person in *England* should own the Constitution of this National Church, as to Doctrine, Discipline and Worship: To perform what the Law requires to that End, is to choose that End and that means; Ordinary Practice being as full a Declaration of ones Mind as Words can be. And all honest Plain-dealing Men so understand it. And then they proceed to illustrate their meaning by that known Passage of Scripture against temporizing in the earlier days of Christianity; 1 Cor. 8. 10. If any Man

Man see thee who hast Knowledge sit at Meat in the Idols Temple, &c. "The Idolaters intended by that Feast to Honour their Idol: The Christians in their Company did not so in Truth, but believed that the Idol being nothing could not pollute the Meat nor the Place but the Action would bespeak another Intention, and how could an Indifferent Observer put the Difference? Therefore *Chap. 10. 20, 21.* this Action so circumstantiated is called, *Having Communion with Devils*, as the Sacrificers to Idols had. *On the whole of which they conclude thus.* "We are not to dissemble and shuffle with God or Men, our Separation testifies, that we count Conformity in some degree sinful, and that we may not partake in that Sin: But to practise it, is to tell the World (if Sincerity be left among Men) that we esteem it lawful: else by *Directing the Intention* (Jesuit like) we might all go to Mass, and do Evil that Good may come. We dare not by Practice thus violate our Consciences, and destroy our avowed Principles. I give you the Paragraphs entire, because they carry so much conviction along with them: and indeed without wrestling, are unanswerable.

Now therefore to wind up this whole Discourse,

If any of those, of what Denomination soever, who *avowedly separate* from the Establish'd Church on a Principle of Conscience (for such only can be Religious Dissenters) do yet *occasionally communicate* with her upon a Reserve of some more private, unaccountable Principles, not yet explained to the World;

If *Separating* at one Time *from*, and *communicating* at another time *with* the Church, be tantamount to *assenting to*, and *dissenting from* the same sort of Worship;

E

If

If *assenting to*, and dissenting from the same sort of Worship carries in its Notion, a *Halting between two Opinions* ;

If a *Halting between two Opinions*, be easily proved culpable from both Testaments, as worshipping GOD and Baal, or joining *Christ* with *Belial* ;

If such *Trimming, Doubling, Time-serving* Practices really give matter of *Scandal to those who are without* the Pale of the Church, making them often blaspheme our God and his most holy Religion on this behalf ;

If they *offend those who are within*, giving them just Umbrage of suspecting want of *Sincerity* and *Purity* in such Professors, and, of accounting them only Politick, or factious *Dissenters* in the State ;

If they lay a *Stumbling Block* before those who are otherwise of their own persuasion, insomuch that they can treat such *Dissenters* from themselves no better than you have heard.

As Men who neither *do* nor *speak the Truth in their Hearts* ;

As Men who are *fallen from the Simplicity that is in Christ* ;

As Apostates from *Sincerity* and *Plain-dealing*, their *original Shibboleth* ;

As *Dissemblers and Shufflers with God and Men* ;

As *Sinful* Compliers with unlawful Terms of *Communion* ;

As *Jesuitical* Prevaricators, who by the Doctrine of *Intention*, *do evil that good may come*.

In one Word, As direct *Violators of Conscience*.

If these Consequences and Assertions are *honestly* and *truly* drawn from the Premises ;

If they are not *forged* and *forc'd* by us, whom they take for their Enemies, but are put into our Mouths and

and Pens by some of their Brethren, who in all other points *take Counsel* with them *against us*, and *walk together as Friends* in the By-paths of Separation :

Then must the *Occasional Communicant* find other Topicks for his Justification, than have hitherto been offer'd: which are all of them so *bewildring* and *perplexed*, not to say *unsatisfactory*, and *tricking*, that dared the Abettors of them but venture them into the world without further disguise, They would be obviated by the meanest Capacity, however unassisted with a needless Skill in Metaphysicks, or affected Distinctions of the *Schools*.

Having thus brought this Controversy to a Head, I shall beg leave before I conclude, for prevention of Misconstructions, to declare here solemnly in the Presence of the most High God whose Servant I profess my self to be, and as I hope to be Partaker of the Merits of my Blessed Redeemer, according as I now speak the Truth, That I have no Aim at any particular *Dissenter* of any Denomination, nor the *whole Body* of them in this Discourse, any further, than that I hope by it, as becomes my Station, to awaken and alarum such as I may have to do with from an incogitant continuance in a Separation, or *Schism* shall I call it, which began its *first Cry* amongst us *without a Cause sufficiently justifiable* in the Judgment of the *Reformed Churches abroad*; has been *blown up* to a Pitch by *open violence*, and *Artifice more sly and dangerous*, to the great detriment of our most excellent *Constitution at home*; and will shortly *expire*, we hope, thro' such *defenceless Practices*, as have been the natural, though unforeseen *Consequences*, of a *Darling Toleration*.

For, God be thank'd, we have by his Providence lived to see that Day within the Gates of this City,

Sir Samuel
Dashwood.

See Her Majesty's most Gracious Speech to both Houses, May 25. Answer to the Address of the Lord Bishop and Clergy of London, March 13. Speech, Oct. 21.

Glanvil's Seasonable Discourses for the Cure and Conviction of Scolding and Infidelity, p. 179, 180.

which opens a large View of Prosperity, that may extend it self through the Kingdom o'er the Walls of our *Jerusalem*: We are arrived to so happy a posture of Affairs in the surprizing Stoppage of prejudicial and partial Elections of the Supreme Magistrate of the Place, by such a Disposition of Men of all Parties to *Regularity* and *Order* in the *State*, as really forebodes methinks the like happy Influences towards *Obedience* in the *Church*. The good of which, as 'tis desired in the first place by the *most Religious* and *Gracious* of *Princes*, So let it be the Endeavour of all Cordial Christians, That as it has been the *Unhappiness* of some former Reigns to bend towards a *Division*, it may on the contrary be the *peculiar Felicity* of Her Majesty's Government to be full of Tendencies towards an Union among her Protestant Subjects.

An *Union of Affections* in the first place, that so we may compass an *Union of Principles*: For to speak the Truth, while we have been contending about the *latter*, we seem in the hurry of the Contest to have almost lost the *former*: " They scuffle and contend about the true way or the true Church, (as one graphically describes the Quarrel between the *Sectarian Zealots* among one another, I would to God it were not applicable to us with them) " till they have talkt themselves out of Sense, out of Charity, and out of Breath: And when they would say on, but know not what, when their Passions are raised, but their Reasons lost, They fall to pelt each other with hard Names; They squabble and strive, and gain nothing on either side but an Addition of Malice and bitter Zeal, more rancour and more damning Sentences;

So

So necessary is it that we should attempt first an *Union of Affections*, when the *Essays for a Reconciliation of Principles* have so often miscarried without it : For tho' a Separation from the true Church of Christ Establish'd among us may be a damnable *Schism*, and every prudent good Man would strive to avoid even a Probability of Eternal Destruction : Yet this is argued (we know) on one side and t'other.

But a *Separation* from *Love* and *Charity*, a *Schism* that eats out the Heart of Christianity, (as some express it) is allowed on both sides, by the *Church-man* and *Dissenter*, to involve Men in *Damnation* without Mercy.

Let us no longer then any of us be gathering of Parties, and filling all Places with Controversy in Religious Matters especially : But as the Ferment is in some measure laid in the *State* ; for shame let it no more work in the *Church* ; where while one is of *Paul*, another is of *Apollos*, and another of *Cephas*, 'tis too visible that but few are of a *Christ*.

Let those especially who cannot fairly *defend* their Post, *surrender* in such due time and manner, that we may be convinced they are for *Peace*.

If they can find that the *Worship* of the Lord according to the *Way* of the *Church of England* can be follow'd for their *present Advantage* ; May the good Spirit of Peace, Unity, and Sincerity, so over-rule their Hearts in this Momentous Affair, that they may find it for their *future Advantage* to follow it continually, in that our GOD shall thereby be no more *dishonoured* through their *Halting between two Opinions* : Their *Christian Brethren* shall be *edified*, *Gain-sayers converted*, and their own Souls, by being Phil. 1. 10. *sincere and without offence*, saved at length in the Day of the Lord *Jesus*.

That

30. For GOD, or for BAAL; &c.

That such may be the blessed Effects of the Conviction of all Backsliders from the Peace and Unity of the Church; God grant, of his abundant Mercy, to all misguided Souls, That as there is but *one Body, and one Spirit, and one Hope of our Calling, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all*; so we may be all of one Heart, and of one Soul, united in one Holy Bond of Truth and of Peace, of Faith and of Charity, within the Pales of one Fold, under one Shepherd, even Thee, O *Blessed Jesu*, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever *one God*, world without of End. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, D. D. late
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